



NEWS RELEASE



United States Department of Agriculture
NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE
 In Cooperation with the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
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102 Governor Street, Room LL20
Richmond, Virginia 23219

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
 August 2, 2017

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Virginia Honey Bee Colonies

Richmond, Virginia - Honey bee colonies for operations with five or more colonies in Virginia as of January 1, 2017 totaled 8,000. This is 23 percent above the 6,500 colonies on January 1, 2016. During 2016, honey bee colonies on April 1, July 1, and October 1 were 6,000, 8,000, and 7,000, respectively, and April 1, 2017 was 8,500.

Honey bee colonies lost for operations with five or more colonies during the quarter of January-March 2017, were 1,400 colonies or 18 percent lost, the highest honey bee colonies loss of the six quarters. The quarter of April-June 2016, at 230 colonies or 4 percent, showed the least amount of lost honey bee colonies.

Honey bee colonies added for operations with five or more colonies during the quarter of January-March 2017 were 1,900 colonies. The quarter of April-June 2017 added 3,100 colonies, the highest number of honey bee colonies added of the six quarters. The quarter of October-December 2016 added 230 colonies, the lowest number of honey bee colonies added.

Honey bee colonies renovated for operations with five or more colonies during the quarter of January-March 2017 were 280. The lowest number of honey bee colonies renovated of the six quarters was October-December 2016 with just 10 colonies. The number of colonies added during the quarter of April-June 2017 was 1,100, the highest number of honey bee colonies renovated. Renovated colonies are those that were requeened or received new honey bees through nuc or package.

Varroa mites were the number one stressor for operations with five or more colonies during each of the quarters surveyed. The quarter of January-March 2017 showed varroa mites at 21.4 percent. The quarter of July-September 2016 experienced the highest percentage of the six quarters at 39.1 percent. The quarter of April-June 2017, at 19.8 percent, was the lowest percentage.

Number of Colonies, Maximum, Lost, Percent Lost, Added, Renovated, and Percent Renovated with Five or More Colonies in Virginia

| Quarter | Number of colonies ¹ | Maximum colonies ² | Lost colonies | Percent lost ³ | Added colonies | Renovated colonies ⁴ | Percent renovated ⁵ |
|------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------|---------------------------|----------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| | (number) | (number) | (number) | (percent) | (number) | (number) | (percent) |
| Jan-Mar 16 | 6,500 | 6,500 | 1,100 | 17 | 560 | 70 | 1 |
| Apr-Jun 16 | 6,000 | 6,500 | 230 | 4 | 2,200 | 480 | 7 |
| Jul-Sep 16 | 8,000 | 8,000 | 810 | 10 | 460 | 360 | 5 |
| Oct-Dec 16 | 7,000 | 7,000 | 730 | 10 | 230 | 10 | <1 |
| Jan-Mar 17 | 8,000 | 8,000 | 1,400 | 18 | 1,900 | 280 | 4 |
| Apr-Jun 17 | 8,500 | 9,000 | 1,000 | 11 | 3,100 | 1,100 | 12 |

¹ Number of colonies as of January 1, April 1, July 1, and October 1. ² Number of colonies at the beginning of quarter plus all colonies moved into the state during the quarter. ³ Percent lost is the number of lost colonies divided by maximum colonies. ⁴ Defined as any surviving colony that was requeened or received new honey bees through nuc or package. ⁵ Percent renovated is the number of renovated colonies divided by maximum colonies.

National release: <http://usda.mannlib.cornell.edu/usda/nass/BeeColonies/2010s/2017/BeeColonies-08-01-2017.pdf>